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ABSTRACT

The document reports on the activities undertaken by occupational specialists for junior and senior high schools of Sarasota County, Florida, in the identification and placement of non-returning students or no-shows. The identification of actual and potential no-shows involves several processes and those who request assistance are presented with alternative educational programs, job placement assistance, and resources from community service organizations. In 1975, 204 actual no-shows were identified of which 148 requested assistance and were given information or resources (19), returned to their educational programs (33), changed to alternate programs (77), placed in jobs (14), and assisted by community service agencies (5). Full-time education enrollments contributed to the funding of the school as a result of the additional enrollment by returning no-show students. Appended materials include a no-show report form and a summary of assistance to no-shows by occupational specialists during September-October 1975. (EC)

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FOLLOW UP OF NO-SHOWS

SPECIAL REPORT

SCHOOL BOARD OF SARASOTA COUNTY

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Program Specialist
Placement and Follow-Up
December 1, 1975

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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I. INTRODUCTION

During the period from the end of the school year in June to reopening of facilities at the end of August, something happens to hundreds of our secondary school students--they voluntarily decide not to return.

While not as severe as it was only two years ago when numbers reached 400 to 500, this situation is still with us. The difference now is that something very specific in the way of a coordinated activity is beginning to reduce the numbers of these non-returning students (hence, the term "no-show") and to identify and assist them back into the mainstream of regular and alternative education.

The following is a brief report reflecting the recent activities of Sarasota County's occupational specialists in assisting with the identification and placement of this year's student no-show population.

II. THE PROBLEM

An individual listed as a "no-show," is a former student who was enrolled in a secondary level program in Sarasota County at the end of the regular school year, was registered to attend in the Fall and then (without official notification, request for transcript, change of address, etc.,) fails to appear at the expected place of enrollment in the Fall.

Because of the large number of families moving in and out of the school district (especially to school systems that start later than Florida) and because request for transcripts and notification of address changes are many times months in getting to our schools, the initial number of non-returning students can appear very high. This number can also appear out of proportion to actual no-shows still within our service area and needing assistance. The large number of "initial no-shows" listed in Appendix B is given only as an indicator of the size of investigative work that has to be done by school personnel before the "actual no-show," the early school leaver who did not return or move away, can be identified.

This smaller number of student leavers is the population that our occupational specialists spend about one month (mid-September to mid-October) in assisting. It should be noted, that the primary purpose is to rescue and aid those individuals who, after being contacted, request some help. The avenues of assistance offered by school-based occupational specialist to no-shows runs the gamut of alternative education, job placement, or contact with a community service organization or agency. Besides collecting some indicators

as to why some students do not return to school the main function is a guidance oriented one--to assist these individuals in a non-threatening manner back into a productive activity.

III. IDENTIFICATION

Identification of actual no-shows who need assistance, from the initial list of students who do not return to assigned schools at the beginning of the school year, is a time-consuming and sometimes frustrating operation. While the process is not standardized among schools, there are similarities. For the most part, registrars and attendance officers purge initial attendance printouts of those students who have notified the school regarding enrollment elsewhere. In some schools, (Riverview, for example) the guidance counselors take a very active part in identifying the students who "should have returned," the actual no-show. At most schools this list is then turned over to the occupational specialist who then does additional contact work to see, if indeed, the individual is still in Sarasota County.

If the former student can be located the specialist conducts a helping interview to offer assistance to the school leaver. This assistance may take the form of enrollment back to the original school, possibly with a more flexible schedule to allow for part-time employment. In many cases the specialist assists the individual with a contact, then enrollment into one of our county's alternative educational programs. Assistance can also take the form of putting the former student in touch with the proper community service agency or sometimes acting as an information resource the occupational specialists can disseminate needed guidance and career related materials.

While visiting teachers/social workers have been doing some limited contacts of a similar nature at the beginning of each school

year, their staff is so small that they by necessity have been unable to work with identifying and contacting the total no-show population. With one occupational specialist at each junior and senior high school, this activity is now receiving much more attention and beginning to pay off.

IV. ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES

Guidance counselors and occupational specialists were first requested to assist this potentially lost human resource as part of the original Design and Implementation of a Model Placement and Follow-Up Program, proposed by Jack Dale, the Program Coordinator in 1973-1974. During October 1973, Dr. Dale identified 442 former students who had not returned to Sarasota County schools and were placed in the category of "dropout."

During the early part of FY 1974-1975, some 425 contacts of initial no-shows were made by occupational specialists who identified about one-half that number as actual no-shows needing some assistance. Our specialists, working closely with guidance counselors and visiting teachers, were able to place many of the individuals requesting help in either alternative educational programs or job placements.

This year, under a more coordinated effort, with greater assistance from school personnel identifying no-shows, and with a standardized reporting format (see Appendix A), occupational specialists were actively engaged in the function of assisting those students who were actual no-shows.

After about the first ten days of school, specialists at our junior and senior high schools, on a district-wide basis, had a list of over 1100 individuals who had not returned to Sarasota schools and were possible no-shows. Through cooperative efforts of guidance counselors, visiting teachers, attendance and records personnel, many telephone calls and numerous visitations to last known addresses, this large number was reduced to 204 individuals who were still within our

reach and classified as "actual no-shows." Eight occupational specialists, one at each junior and senior high school, continued to make personal contact with individuals to explain the resources available through school and community and to offer assistance if needed. Of this 204 non-returning students, 148 requested some form of help and all were assisted by occupational specialists within the month of October. (See Appendix B for specific breakdown of individual placements and other assistance.) Of the 148, 19 were assisted by information or resources available through the occupational specialists, many times career related literature. One hundred and ten individuals were placed back into educational programs, 33 back to the original school and 77 into various alternative paths to high school completion. Fourteen individuals were placed into jobs by occupational specialists and five others were assisted through community service agencies contacted by occupational specialists.

In all, every person requesting some help received assistance. Recycled back into gainful activity were 148 potentially lost individual resources, in many instances because of the good alternative educational programs available in Sarasota County.

NOTE: Approximately twenty-five actual and potential dropouts from Booker High School were contacted and recruited back into school by John Marsden and Robert Wieboldt during the summer of 1975. These two six-grade teachers at Booker should be highly complimented for this activity and for further assistance given to their school's occupational specialist in contacting additional no-shows in the Fall.

V. FTE COST BENEFITS

The assistance by occupational specialists given to school no-shows (and leavers throughout the school year) is of primary concern to all educators interested in the welfare of individual students and with seeing that individual needs are met by flexible high school scheduling, alternative programs, job placement assistance, and utilization of community service organizations. A second point to be made is the additional FTE funds generated by the enrollment of these individuals in Sarasota County schools.

For classes or courses that operate on an established schedule for a regular school year, short cuts to figuring the FTE may be followed. Assuming that a full-time student attends five hours of classes per day, then any fraction of the five-hour day may be used to compute the FTE with the same result for a full year course as achieved with the complete formula.

For this report we are approximating the FTE generated by the placement of no-shows into regular schools (base FTE $745) and into various alternative programs which generate a higher funding formula. Using the example of those no-shows placed by occupational specialists back to their original high school (see Appendix B) and assuming that each is a full-time student (300 minutes of classroom instruction a day) then the FTE funds generated would look like this:

33 FTE X Base $745 = $24,585

Following this procedure for all the placements of no-shows made by occupational specialists for the one-month period (mid September to mid-October) has produced approximately the resulting funds to the Sarasota County School Board.

FTE Cost Factor	Program Placement of Students		Approximate FTE $
Base 1.0	Back to original school	33 x 745 =	$ 24,585
1.28	New Directions	23 x 1.28 x " =	21,933
1.1	Ideal School	21 x 1.1 x " =	17,210
1.6	Adult Evening High School	26 x 1.6 x " =	30,992
2.18	Vocational Center Adult	2 x 2.18 x " =	3,248
3.7	Crossroads Program	2 x 3.7 x " =	5,513
15.0	Homebound (100 hours of instruction) 1 x 100 hours ÷ 900 = .11 x 15.0 x " =		1,229
2.64	Work Evaluation (50 hours of instruction) 2 x 50 hours ÷ 900 = .11 x 2.64 x " =		216
			$104,926

The resulting total of approximately $105,000 gives a most positive insight into what eight specialists can do in only one month (along with their other duties) when placement of early school leavers and no-shows is given a priority.

VI. CONCLUSION

Over 200 former students of Sarasota County schools were identified as actual no-shows by the school system's occupational specialists during September 1975. Of these potentially lost students, 148 requested assistance when contacted and all were serviced in a non-threatening guidance oriented activity. One hundred and ten of these early leavers were assisted with enrollment back into full-time educational programs generating approximately $105,000 in actual FTE monies. Others were assisted with job placements, through community agencies and informational resources provided by this county's occupational specialists.

While the specialists (eleven) in our school system have many other duties and functions, their recent work in identifying, contacting, and following through with quality guidance services to no-shows has proven highly successful. As this school year progresses, and we offer quality education to the majority of students, occupational specialists will continue to assist both the mainstream and the potential or actual early school leaver. Hopefully, it will not be forgotten that the original legislation creating their position mandated as a top priority, service to the student who for one reason or another cannot cope with the standard high school educational system. Alienated youth in our school system have a friend in their school-based occupational specialist.

APPENDIX A

NO-SHOW REPORT

Time Period: September 1975 - October 15, 1975

Definition: "No-Shows" are defined as students who have pre-registered during the Spring of the preceding school year and who fail to attend (show) during the first three weeks of school in the Fall.

"No-Shows" can be further defined as 9th through 12th graders who are either (a) transfers, within the district or to another educational system out of the district, (b) those who for all intents and purposes are early-leavers (dropouts).

Population:

Number of initial no-shows (a & b) _____

Number of actual no-shows (b) _____

Contacts:

Total number of no-shows contacted _____

Number requesting some assistance _____

Placements:

Number of no-shows assisted (a through j) _____

a. Back to original school _____

b. New Directions _____

c. Ideal School (Venice) _____

d. Adult Evening High School _____

e. Booker Downtown _____

f. Vo-Tech Center _____

g. Crossroads _____

h. Community Agency Service _____

i. Job Placement

1. full-time _____

2. part-time _____

j. Other_____

Submitted by:_____

School:_____

Date:_____

APPENDIX B

ASSISTANCE TO NO-SHOWS BY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALISTS

September-October 1975

Initial no-show list	1131	
Actual no-shows (early school leavers)	204	
Requesting assistance	148	
Total number assisted		148

Areas of Placement or Assistance

Information Resources	19
Back to original school	33
New Directions Program	23
Ideal School (Venice)	21
Adult Evening High School	26
Booker Downtown (Work Experience)	-
Vo-Tech Center (full-time adult)	2
Crossroads Program (adjustive)	2
Community Service Agency	5
Job Placements:	
Full time	4
Part time	10
Other	
Homebound (one month)	1
Work Evaluation (two weeks)	2
	148